

Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board
Minutes of the Meeting of October 12, 2021

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Place: Second Floor Conference Room, MH/ID/EI, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon

Present

Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator and CJAB Vice-Chair; Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge; Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner; Nicole Eisenhart, District Attorney's Office; Tara Fancovic, Domestic Relations; John Correll, Probation Services; Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator; Tina Litz, LCCF Warden; Brian Deiderick, Chief Public Defender; Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator; James Donmoyer, Director of Drug and Alcohol Commission; Jon Hess, County Police Chiefs Representative; LeAnne Burchik, Executive Director of Domestic Violence Intervention; and, John P. Shott, CJAB Planner.

Absent

Bruce Klingler, Sheriff; Erin Moyer, Director of Children and Youth; Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach; and, Kim Mackey, PCCD Regional Representative

Guests

Boris Baxter, Mission Director for Jubilee Ministries; Lori Burrus, N.A.A.C.P.

Proxies entered for the record: Nicole Eisenhart, First Assistant District Attorney, for Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney and CJAB Chair; Tara Fancovic, Deputy Director, Domestic Relations, for Michael Anderson, Director of Domestic Relations; John Correll, Adult Probation Supervisor, for Audrey Rakow, Director of Probation Services.

CJAB Vice-Chair Holly Leahy called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. Presence of a quorum noted. Self-introductions by Board members.

Minutes of 08/10/2021 CJAB Meeting—Approved on a motion President Judge Tylwalk, seconded by Ms. Axarlis.

Ms. Leahy announced that Michael Anderson, Director of Domestic Relations, is the new core member of the Board. Mr. Anderson was unable to attend today's meeting, so the Board will formally welcome him at the December meeting.

Ms. Leahy welcomed today's guest speaker, Mr. Boris Baxter, Mission Director for Jubilee Ministries. Mr. Baxter gave a brief presentation on the work of Jubilee Ministries. The Lebanon facility has 54 beds to accommodate men participating in the program. Contrary to what man assume, Jubilee Ministries does not restrict its services to prisoners, former inmates, or believing Christians. Jubilee is a faith-based organization that counsels and supports those who are willing to change their lives for the better, though most of the men served have been involved with the criminal-justice system. Organization also provides drug/alcohol counseling as well as some mental-health counseling. Jubilee is contemplating the possibility of including some sex offenders in their counseling component. At present, Jubilee is serving 17 men, six of whom have found employment. The President Judge and Warden Litz recognized and thanked Mr. Baxter and staff for their good work at the prison as well as for the fine facilities operated at the organization's site on South 12th St. in the City.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- **D.U.I. Court**—At present, 24 offenders are participating in the program, with the Court preparing to accept two new individuals. Ongoing concern about the decreased number of participants. The lower numbers are not the result of fewer D.U.I. arrests; rather, they are the result of offenders not meeting the eligibility requirements or unwilling to enter the program.
- **Renaissance-Crossroads**-- Current number of participants is 10 (seven in long-term), with two participants set to graduate in the near future. One participant recently absconded. PA Counseling and the Crossroads Advisory Team are prepared to implement changes that will shorten the length of in-patient stay to six months. This change also eliminates the program's transition period that requires participants in Crossroads to look for work, find suitable housing, etc. A shorter long-term component could provide an incentive for eligible offenders to enter Crossroads and increase the participation rate, which has continued to be low, a situation that could jeopardize future funding from PCCD.
- **Prison Reduction**—Average Daily Population (ADP) at the LCCF is 299. PCCD has approved the grant application to PCCD for federal Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) funding to continue the vivitrol program at the LCCF.
- **Mental Health**—TEAM M.I.S.A. (Mental Illness and Substance Abuse) continues to meet monthly, reviewing an average of six to eight cases per session. Some of the most pressing issues the team addresses with their clients regard problems with housing/home plans and compliance with medication directives.

Number of reported suicides in the county, to date, is eight. Statistical breakdown: five male, three female; average age of 50.6; seven white, one Hispanic; five by firearm, two by drug overdose, one by ingesting poison; one veteran; six with a known mental health history, two with a known drug/alcohol history, two known by MH/ID/EI. Total number of suicides for 2020 was 21.

- **Veterans Court**—Current number of participants is 20, with a referral from the D.U.I. Court program in the offing. The President Judge noted that the participants in this specialty court are a unique group of individuals embracing a strong sense of comradery. The Court matches each participant with a mentor, who provides extra support and encouragement. Mentoring component is working quite well.

CJAB DEPARTMENTS: REPORTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST

Day Reporting Center—Current number of active participants is 31, representing a downward trend. Probation continues to use the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R), a recognized assessment tool, to determine offenders' eligibility for the DRC program. Numbers still impacted by the PA Superior Court ruling in *Commonwealth v. Koger*. In this case, the Superior Court ruled that courts must advise an offender of the rules and conditions of probation at the time of sentencing, or the Court cannot charge the offender with a technical violation for failing to comply with the restrictions.

Heroin Task Force—Number of confirmed overdose deaths through August was 23. The number for 2020 was 39; therefore, the County is on pace, unfortunately, to match or surpass that number by the end of the 2021. Of the confirmed deaths for this year, 15 were male and eight were female. In addition, 17 of the deaths involved fentanyl.

Approximately 80 persons attended the Overdose Awareness Vigil and Recovery Celebration on August 31. The event, organized by Stronger Together, took place on the front steps of the Municipal Building. Recovery Day, the other event sponsored by Stronger Together, took place on Sept. 25 at Monument Park in the City. Viewed as a success with approximately 100 persons in attendance.

Offender Reentry Coalition—No report. Ryan Wertz is now Director of Community Action Partnership, replacing Sam Ortiz.

Other Updates from CJAB Departments—

Intermediate Punishment (IP) Funding for FY 2021-2022 (\$500,000)—PCCD awarded the County \$500,000 in State IP-Treatment funding to continue the Renaissance-Crossroads program for another year. The County will not have to submit a project modification to reflect the planned revisions to the long-term track since they do not alter the grant budget.

CJAB “Mini-Grant” for 2021—County expended the \$2,000 awarded by PCCD and the County Commissioners Association of PA (CCAP). These grant funds supported the ongoing suicide-prevention campaign in the County by defraying some of the cost of posting ads on Google and Facebook about help available for those who might be suicidal.

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- ***CJAB Strategic Planning: Board Mission Statement and Guidelines for Members***—On a motion by President Judge Tylwalk, seconded by Mr. Deiderick, the Board voted to approve the CJAB Mission Statement and Guidelines for Members (attached) as the first step in the preparation of the 2022-2023 Strategic Plan.
- ***Planning and Priorities for 2022-2023***—Members reviewed and discussed a list of priorities for the Strategic Plan. One of the priorities in PCCD’s Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 (Goal 2) focuses on “healing-informed approaches to address the impacts of trauma and the needs of diverse populations.” Members agreed that trauma-informed care should also be a priority/goal included in the local plan. Members agreed to invite Mike Ritter, Deputy Director of DVI, to the next CJAB meeting to make a presentation about trauma-informed care. Mr. Ritter is a certified trauma-competent professional. The CJAB will move forward with the planning process with the expectation that members will approve a final document in December. Adhering to this timeframe will ensure that the LCCJAB meets the State’s Minimum Operating Standards for CJABs.

NEW BUSINESS

- Election of CJAB Officers and approval of CJAB meeting dates for 2022 should take place at the December 7 Board meeting. Meeting dates to be determined by the 2022 court calendar, which Court Administration is about ready to release.

ADJOURNMENT—With no further business to conduct, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m. on a motion by Ms. Axarlis, seconded by President Judge Tylwalk.

NEXT CJAB MEETING: Tuesday, December 7, 2021, 11:00 a.m., MH/ID/EI

CJAB MISSION STATEMENT

The ongoing mission of the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board is to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of the local criminal justice system, and by means of communication, cooperation, and collaboration, enhance and improve the system and services in the most effective, efficient, and cost-effective manner possible.

YOUR ROLE AS A CJAB MEMBER

As a member of the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (LCCJAB), you are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Be willing, able, and prepared to participate in free and open discussions with your colleagues.
- Remain aware of trends that commonly present themselves as matters of concern within your department.
- Understand that inter-departmental collaboration and communication is critical to the future growth of criminal justice departments in Lebanon County.
- Know that you, as the leader of your department, are in charge of how anything the Board discusses will ultimately be (or not be) implemented in your office.
- Know that there are moments when negotiation and compromise will have to take place, and that consensus is always the preferred solution.
- Attend CJAB meetings regularly so that you stay informed of the issues presented and are able to represent your agency more appropriately.
- Have read the CJAB Bylaws at least one time.
- Submit questions or concerns about the Board to the CJAB Planner so that the CJAB Planner has an opportunity to discuss such matters with the Board Chair.
- Participate, when necessary, in electronic voting about initiatives under consideration by the Board.
- Know that Board members may express concerns without threat or retaliation. Our Board demands decent, non-hostile conduct during meetings.